WOMAN'S HOME PAGE

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WHAT EVERY WOMAN OUGHT TO KNOW

MAKING GOOD BREAD

TABLE SUGGESTIONS

"POOH! Anybody can make bread," I fancy I hear one of you say.

That may be true, but what kind of bread—good, bad or indifferent? That makes all the difference in the world. The truth is, there is nothing in the whole range of cooking that is so uneven in its results as bread. That is the experience of the majority of cooks, amateur and professional. I was talking on this subject once with the very capable woman who was at that time, administering kitchen affairs for me, and who always had the most delicious and toothsome bread.

"You never seem to make a mistake, Mary, or to have bad luck with your baking," I said.

"There's no need of either, madam," was Mary's reply. "It is just lack of care. When I make bread I put my mind to it, and see to it that it is right."

And then Mary made a statement that quite contradicts the one made by the girl who received the proposition for this lesson so cavalierly:

"And not everybody can make good bread, no matter how hard they try. There's Nellie, now"—Nellie was her assistant, whom she was teaching to cook—"it's no use to try to teach her; she never can do it; she's too heavy-handed; she'll never make a cook. I was telling her that this morning."

Alertness Necessary in Cooking

At first I didn't quite see what Mary meant, but I found out by watching. The girl moved clumsily; she touched things as though her hand was of iron; she clutched rather than held whatever was in her grasp; there was no lightness, no alertness to any of the motions. She was just "heavy"; that described her better than any other word would have done. I have seen a few people like her since, and I have found out in every case that they were not good cooks; no matter how conscientiously they tried, they could not succeed. It was the hopeless heaviness of their movements.

I give you this piece of information for two reasons: To show you that the girl who jumped at her conclusions jumped in the wrong direction, and to give you some information that may stand you in stead in time to come when it shall fall to you to look for the new maid.

Before we begin mixing the bread I have a word to say to you about the yeast for making the dough rise.

Yeast

In these days the yeast most generally used is the convenient compressed yeast, but when my pupil had her lessons in bread-making she had first of all to learn to make yeast, as housekeepers then depended almost wholly upon home-made yeast.

And even now, if one lives at quite a distance from town, and the grocer doesn't come regularly for orders, it is most convenient to have one's yeast jug to go to when there is bread to be made. I know housekeepers who never let themselves get out of this necessary article, generally using the last cupful with which to start a new supply.

It is no difficult matter, this of yeast making, as you will soon discover. The dread of undertaking it is far more than the real task of doing it, as is true in so many things. You will need the following ingredients in the given proportions:

Simple Ingredients

One large potato, one tablespoonful of hops, loose, one pint of boiling water, one heaping tablespoonful of flour, one heaping teaspoonful of sugar, one heaping teaspoonful of salt, one-quarter of a teaspoonful of ginger, one-half a yeast cake dissolved in half a cupful of lukewarm water or half a cupful of yeast. Wash the potato well, pare it, and put it at once into cold water. If you neglect to do this the potato will discolor and spoil the appearance of the yeast.

Steep the hops in the boiling water.

Mix the flour, sugar, ginger and salt in a large bowl, then grate the potato into this flour mixture; let the hop water boil for one minute, then strain it over the potato and flour, and mix it as quickly as possible. It should thicken like starch with no cooking, but if it fails to do this put it over the fire for a few minutes.

Allow for Fermentation

If it is too thick add a little more boiling water until it is the consistency of cream; set it aside to cool, and when it is lukewarm add the yeast. Put it in a warm place to rise until it is frothy and light, beating it down every half hour. When it is risen sufficiently, put it in a jar or a glass bottle, cork it and keep it cool. Don't fill the receptacle; you'll be likely to have an explosion if you do, and find your yeast anywhere but where you put it. Remember, the jar not over two-thirds full, to allow for fermentation.

THE BREAD BEFORE AND AFTER RISING

When you have to take some yeast out do not take the jar into a warm place, but pour it out where it is kept, and be sure that the cork is replaced at once. You will notice that the potato is not cooked, but is grated raw. Now many of the rules that are in use call for boiled potatoes. I do not suppose that the yeast itself is any better made with the uncooked potatoes, but it keeps better.

It is more likely to turn sour soon when the cooked potato is used, just as any cooked vegetables spoil more quickly than uncooked ones. It is certainly more trying, both to fingers and patience, to grate the raw potato than to mash the cooked one, but the result will be better, and isn't that worth taking a little trouble for?

Beginning Bread-Making

And now for the bread itself.

The first step is to examine your hands, to see that they are quite clean, rings removed and nails in order, and you are ready to begin.

The rule I am going to give you—for we don't want to undertake too much at the beginning—will make a single loaf or a pan of biscuits. You can increase the proportions as you desire a larger quantity, but I would make my experiment with the single loaf.

Use one cupful of milk or water, lukewarm; one-half a teaspoonful of salt, one-half teaspoonful of sugar, one-quarter of a cupful of yeast, or one quarter a yeast cake dissolved in one-quarter of a cupful of lukewarm water, and from three to three and a half cupfuls of flour.

Milk Bread

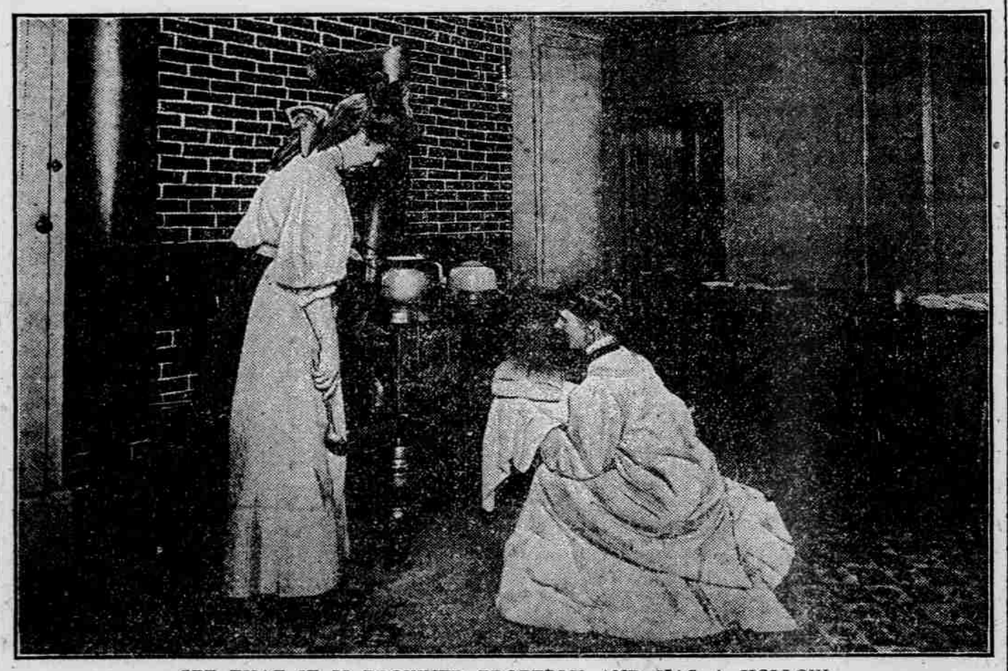
Milk bread, I think, is finer-grained and smoother than bread that is mixed with water, and I have an idea that it is more delicate, and at the same time more nourishing. Still, water bread is good, and where milk is not easily obtained, or is too expensive to use for mixing, you will, I am sure, find no fault with its substitute.

If you use milk you must heat it to boiling in the double boiler; mere scalding will not do, it must be boiled. This is to prevent the dough from turning sour while rising, as it often will do in warm weather unless this precaution is taken.

After the milk has been boiled turn it into the mixing bowl and set it aside to cool. When just lukewarm add the salt, sugar and yeast, then the flour, measured after sifting. Mix it thoroughly with a knife or spoon, and then when it is well mixed and is stiff enough to knead, turn it out onto a well-floured board, and knead it until it is soft and elastic and can be worked without any flour.

Kneading

You need not make hard work of the kneading; it is a matter of dexterity rather than of strength, lightness and quickness of touch rather than heavy bearing down upon the mass. What you want to do is to get it well mixed, so that every particle shall be permeated with the yeast, and it shall be perfectly smooth and free from lumps. Use only the tips of the fingers and the ball of the hand, press lightly and do not break the smooth crust that will form under proper kneading. You may have a little trouble the first time and possibly the second, but in this, as in most things, "practice makes perfect," so don't get discouraged but keep on trying until you succeed.



SEE THAT IT IS BROWNED PROPERLY AND HAS A HOLLOW SOUND WHEN YOU RAP IT

And let me tell you as a secret that there is no better exercise for the chest and arms than this, and if you have a flat chest, flabby muscles and drooping shoulders, just take up bread-making. You'll be surprised what it will do in the way of development.

Letting Bread Rise

So soon as the dough is a smooth, elastic ball, put it back into the mixing bowl to rise over night. Cover it with a clean bread-cloth, with a pan or something else that fits closely, to keep out the air, so that no hard crust will form on the outside, but the whole mass may be kept soft.

KNEADING IS THE BASIS OF GOOD BREAD

Be sure you put it where it will not be in a draught, or where it will be subject to no marked change in temperature. Then you may go away and leave it, for the busy yeast is doing its work and getting it ready for your hands in the morning.

And there you find it beautifully risen, ready to make into the loaf or the biscuit. When well risen it should be double its original bulk; work it over in the bowl, doubling in from the edges toward the center until it is smooth; let it rise again, which it will do quickly, until it is double its bulk, then shape it into a loaf and set it to rise in the pan in which it is to be baked.

Baking

Let it rise until it is light, then bake in an oven in which you can hold the hand twelve seconds without getting too hot. At first you will have to ask advice, and take counsel with someone to whom bread-making is not a novelty, until you have come to know by yourself when the oven, the bread or the rolls are "just right."

Bake your bread from three-quarters of an hour to an hour—watching it carefully all the time, but more carefully at the last. See that it browns properly—a lovely, soft, golden brown with not a hint of a scorch—and that it has a hollow sound when you rap it with your knuckle.

Having mastered bread-making, you may call yourself a cook. It seems a dry and uninteresting branch of proficiency in that line, I admit, but if you consider how necessary an article bread is, how inseparable from our every meal, you will realize the importance of knowing thoroughly how to prepare this fundamental food.

To sweeten the week's lesson, however, I am giving you some additional household suggestions.

Conserves and Marmalades

Conserves are superlative preserves. There is no difference between the two in proportions of fruit and sugar, the old-fashioned rule of "pound for pound" being followed in the majority of recipes for conserves, but the method of cooking the fruit after the sugar is added makes the difference, a flavorful one, between "conserves" and "preserves."

When making preserves the fruit is cooked in the syrup to the "done" degree only, a careful housewife taking great care her peaches, plums, pears or what not do not lose their fair proportions through over-cooking, but in making conserves, of which there are two kinds, the soft and the dry, long cooking is the rule.

Conserves

Soft conserves demand a slow fire and a long time over it in order to reach the necessary condition of smooth firmness, for when done the fruit must be cooked down to a rich velvety mass that can be molded, and thinly sliced like cheese.

To prepare dry conserves the fruit is cooked in a rich syrup until the latter has "struck through." The fruit is then drained from the syrup and the cooking process continued in a cool oven, or, better, under glass by the rays of the sun. This kind of conserve is usually packed in sugar for keeping, and is eaten from the fingers like candy.

The following recipe for what the French call Raisiné will give a very choice conserve: Skin four pounds of grapes and cook with one pint of water until the seeds are free from the pulp, rub through a fine colander, add four pounds of ripe pears peeled and cut into small pieces, and cook over a slow fire until reduced to three-quarters of the amount; then add sugar in the proportion of three-quarters of a pound for every pound of fruit and one pound for every pint of water. Cook until a drop of the conserve on a chilled plate will keep its shape.

Turn into small glasses or gallipots and place in a cool oven for nine or ten hours. When the cooking process is finished the conserve should be stiff enough to slice smoothly. For apple raisné cut in small pieces two and one-half pounds of high-flavored cooking apples, put them over a slow fire with one pint of sweet cider and simmer until soft: then add an equal quantity of chopped seeded raisins, one cupful of water or cider and four pounds of sugar; cook very slowly until the above-mentioned test will apply successfully, rub through a fine colander and put in small jars.

Served with tiny balls of cream cheese or a fluff of whipped cream, and accompanied by unsweetened wafers and chocolate, raisiné makes the finest kind of a luncheon sweet.

A conserve made from citron melon is very good. Make it in the proportion of ten pounds of melon, eight pounds of sugar, four large lemons and one-fourth pound of green ginger root. Pare and cut the melon in small pieces, then cover it with lime water made of ½-lb. of lime and one gallon of water. Let it stand for five or six hours, then drain, cover with cold water, bring to the boiling point and drain again. Put the melon, the lemons, sliced, and half of the sugar in the preserving kettle and set away for twenty-four hours; then add the remainder of the sugar, and cook over a slow fire for five or six hours.

A "dry" conserve, a Turkish conceit, is also made of citron, and will prove a practical novelty to many. It is good for a luncheon sweet or to serve with ice-cream. Pare and chop very fine a fresh citron, cover it with slightly salted water and boil until tender; drain and cover with diluted white wine vinegar or lemon juice and let stand at least twenty-four hours. Drain again, cover with a thick sugar syrup made as for canning fruit and slowly boil until a thick green paste results, then add one-half cupful of rose-water and continue cooking until a little dropped in ice-water can be rolled in a firm ball. Pour to the depth of one-half inch into oiled pans, cover with glass and stand in the sun—or in a cool oven—for twelve hours. Cut in fancy shapes and pack in layers, with granulated sugar between, in air-tight boxes.

Tomato Marmalade

We are so accustomed to look upon the humble little green tomato as fit only to play the part of "supe" in the mixed pickle-pot, that it is hard to associate it with a toothsome marmalade, but this fruit—for the tomato is a berry—really shines as a marmalade ingredient. Peel the tomatoes and cut in halves or quarters. Add the sugar, allowing about thirteen ounces for every pound of fruit, and stand away over night. In the morning add one lemon.

BONING A WAIST

Up-to-date Method of Accomplishing this Necessary Dressmaking Detail

THE boning of a waist lining is an important operation upon which depends much of the success of the finished garment. There are several methods by which this may be done, the one essential point in all being that the lining shall be stretched at the waist—a distance about one inch above and one inch below this line—and eased the remainder of the bone's length.

It was not so long ago that whalebone was considered the only material possible for use in a good gown; there were substitutes of horn and steel, but all were open to one objection or another, the principal being that they bent out of shape or wore through the garment. The invention and perfection of featherbone has proven a boon to dressmakers generally. Whalebone is now both scarce and expensive, and a dependable substitute is welcomed.

Featherbone

The usual method of applying featherbone to the seams of a waist is by means of an attachment, fitting any machine, that the manufacturers supply for the asking, together with instruction for its use. The seams should be finished either by binding, overcasting or notching and pressed open before the featherbone is applied.

The height to which the bones shall extend depends upon the size of the figure, stouter figures require higher boning than those that are slender. The general rule for 36 bust measure is to extend the bones about five inches above the waist-line, while for an unusually stout figure they sometimes reach to the armhole on the back seam of the under-arm piece and extend proportionately on the other seams.

Make a mark for "height of bone" on each seam; a pin will answer, but it is a good rule in dressmaking to make all important markings with a thread. The attachment is placed in position on the sewing-machine, the featherbone slipped (wrong-side up) through the channel provided for it and in such way that the needle will pass through the exact center in sewing, and the attachment is screwed down tight so it will not slip.

Using the Machine

Have the bone extend one inch beyond the machine needle and one-half inch beyond the mark on the seam for height of bone. Lay the pressed-open seam over it, the stitching of the seam at the center and the pressure foot over the left-hand turned-back edge of seam. Take the first stitch one-half inch below the mark on the seam, measure and cut the required length of bone.

Stitch close to the stitching of the seam, but not in it. Push the material toward the needle in order to *ease* the seam to the bone. One inch above the waist-line begin to stretch the seam and one inch below the waist-line begin again to push the seam toward the needle in sewing.

On the under-arm seam the stretching may continue to the bottom of the waist; this stretching corresponds to the "springing" of whalebones inserted in casings attached to the seams, the amount of "spring" being varied on the different seams according to the figure.

Finishing the Top

To finish the bone at the top, rip the covering down one-half inch, cut off one-half inch of bone and under covering, turn the end of the outside covering over the end of the bone and tack it at each side, leaving one-half inch of the bone unattached to the seam. A bone must be placed at each front edge before the hooks and eyes are sewed on; for this purpose there is a special kind of uncovered featherbone called "hook-and-eye bone."

It is advisable to have a seam allowance of three-eighths inch on all seam edges; this means that the edge of each represents the cutting-line, and a parallel line, three-eighths of an inch inside this edge, will be the sewing-line. Unless one is certain of being able to gauge the three-eighths of an inch accurately by the eye, it will prove a wise plan to make a pencil-mark at this distance from the seam edge and run the tracing-wheel along the penciled line.

This precaution is especially advisable at the under-arm and the shoulder seams where alterations may be necessary, as it will permit wide seam allowance to be made in cutting, without endangering the accuracy of the sewing-line.

Marking Material

The tracing-wheel will do the work on linings or other materials on which it will leave a mark; on woolens the sewing-line must be marked in a different manner. When cutting woolen goods trace along the edge of these "outlet seams" with tailors' chalk. In cutting allow one-half inch or more beyond, then make a second chalk-line, three-eighths of an inch *inside* the first and mark along this line with tailors' tacks, which, as the cloth was doubled before cutting, will mark both sides alike.

Tailors' Tacks

Tailors' tacks are made by taking alternately one long stitch (an inch or more) on the upper side and two short stitches through the two layers of cloth to the underside. Use basting thread, doubled, and do not make a knot in the end.

Make these stitches along the chalked line, then cut every long end of thread, separate the two edges of the cloth slightly and cut the threads that are between. The short ends will remain in the cloth and mark the seam-line.

Inserting the Hook-and-Eye Bone

The hook-and-eye bone is stitched in the front without the boning attachment. Baste to the inside of each front edge an inch-wide strip of bias crinoline, making the basting threads in the line of the tracing.

Lay the waist on the machine, the inside uppermost; place the bone just *outside* the traced line and with the curved side down and the top of the bone not quite so high as the boning of the dart, stitch through the center of the bone.

Turn the front of the waist under from top to bottom at the traced line and make a row of stitching one-eighth of an inch inside of the fold edge.

An inch and one-quarter is about the correct spacing of the hooks and eyes sewed on alternately, the hooks so their ends will come one-eighth inch inside the edge and extending the eyes the same distance beyond the edge. Hem a facing of the lining or a length of bone-casing to the inside of the waist, covering the sewing of the hooks and eyes.

Using Whalebone

When whalebone is employed, single bone-casing must first be sewed to the seams. One inch of the bone-casing is turned over at the top, forming a little pocket, which is to be left free from the seam for one-half inch, as was the featherbone. The casing is then run, slightly fulled, to each edge of the seam, the center of the casing over the stitching of the seam.

In order to "spring" the bones it is necessary to sew through them, and in order to make this possible they should be soaked for about an hour in warm water. Cut the end of the whalebone round and scrape or shave about one-half inch with a knife or scissors blade to make it as thin as possible.

Push the bone in the casing and up into the little pocket. Secure it here by taking two or three stitches with twist through the center of the bone and to each side of the casing. An inch and one-half *above* the waist-line, sew through bone and casing again.

"Springing" the Bone

It is to be "sprung" across the waist-line by pushing the bone into the casing as tight as possible, so that it bends out slightly rounded, and holding it so by sewing through bone and casing one inch below the waist-line.

There is a third method of boning that is less work than either of the two described, though it is not considered so desirable for a costume waist.

One-quarter inch additional seam-allowance must be made at every seam edge. The seams are not pressed open, but are stitched together three-eighths of an inch from the first row, making a casing for the bone which is slipped in and tacked as previously described.

Trimming the Bones

All the bones should be cut off one-half inch above the lower edge of the waist; a bias strip of crinoline is then basted around the bottom, stretching the outer edge of the bias, where necessary, to make it fit smoothly; both crinoline and waist are then turned over three-eighths of an inch and basted, after which the turned-up edge is catch-stitched to the crinoline that extends above it.

THE WOMAN IN BUSINESS

Appearance, Earnestness and Diligence Necessary Business Assets

BUSINESS life calls for a large quantity of what is called "gumption," but it also imparts this rare grace to teachable women, so it is always surprising that more workers do not fit themselves to absorb it. You may have all the learning the colleges can impart, but if you haven't "gumption," which is only another word for common-sense, with it, the knowledge is almost useless.

And common-sense never comes to the woman who does not want to receive it. Remember that, you business women who have failed to get on in the busy world. If you have failed, look within for the cause rather than to any outward condition or circumstance. There are cases where workers are not appreciated, and are underpaid, but a good worker can always leave the uncongenial place for a better one.

Neatness a Stepping-stone

The untidy woman can never succeed in business life, simply because no man can like an untidy woman. He may have to keep her in his office for some reason other than that she does her work well, but he endures her rather than takes any satisfaction out of her work. And the untidy woman about her personal appearance is nearly always untidy about her work. It takes the severely plain woman with the neat business suit, the absence of trimmings, the plain hair-dressing and the perfect cleanliness of body to turn out good work.

One business man confessed to his wife that he had to move his desk because every time he lifted his eyes from his work they rested on the frowsy head and soiled collar of his stenographer. She would have been greatly surprised to know what he thought of her, as she appeared in her worn-out party finery, with her hair done in the latest and most exaggerated style, day after day, but she was not concerned enough about the welfare of the office to notice little things.

Some women wear out their soiled, frayed best clothes in their kitchens and think themselves very economical, while others who have no kitchens regard an office or store as the proper place to get the last bit of usefulness out of their garments. If you can only have one dress, let it be a neat, serviceable, plain, clean office dress by all means.

A Pleasing Appearance an Asset

And for your own sake, and the sake of the people who must work with you, learn to do your hair without puffs and rats and somebody else's hair. A simple, natural arrangement, that leaves time for cleanliness, is a thousand times better than the elaborate structures some women build up on their heads.

There is trouble ahead for the man who must take into his office the woman who has been spoiled at home. Very frequently it happens that a man who has allowed his wife to rule the home, and who has never denied her anything he could possibly afford, dies leaving his family perfectly destitute.

Not having character enough to manage his finances in order to lay by for the rainy day, and lacking the patience and firmness necessary to educate his wife along this line, the man drops out of his place leaving a spoiled, almost helpless widow to do what she can toward supporting the children and herself. That woman will wear the patience entirely out of her employer unless she has sense enough to know circumstances alter cases.

There are many women of that class who have never learned that important lesson in business all over the land today, as weary employers can testify. Their way is always right and everybody else is in error. If anyone ventures to disagree with them, tears are called into requisition, and the average business man hates tears worse than he does poison.

Business as Business

Perhaps the greatest nuisance of all in business life is the woman who is only working until she gets married. Now all women have in their hearts the feeling that when the right man comes along the position will be cheerfully given up, but the successful workers are not out hunting up the right man. They are quietly and carefully attending to their duties, knowing that ideally happy marriages are not made by the woman in the case doing the courting.

The entrance of a man—any man—into some places of business is the signal for the women workers to "sit up and, not only pay attention, but demand it. They spend more time trying to attract attention than in doing their work, for they regard marriage as release from bondage, and therefore everything else is secondary.

Workers, not Martyrs

When a young girl gets it into her head that she is a martyr because she must earn her own living, the next thought that naturally follows is that some man ought to support her, and she sets herself to work to capture a husband. If half the time she spends in thinking and dreaming and planning about getting away from the "drudgery" of business life were spent in doing her work well, she would be a success in any walk in life.

And when the worker is a widow bent on matrimony the situation becomes intense. Pity the bachelor or widower who employs a designing female of this type! If he doesn't sigh for a lodge in a wilderness very shortly he must be made of flint.

The ideal business life permits the employer to choose his helpers, but in real life they are often thrust upon him, and he must bear the consequences with what grace he can muster.

NEW IDEAS IN COOKING

Appetizing and Inexpensive Novelties for the Table

Hutspot

Hutspot is a Dutch dish with a history, and is eaten with especial relish on the anniversary of the raising of the siege of Leyden, during which time of hardship it had its origin. Beef, pork, carrots, onions and potatoes are the ingredients. Proportions do not matter, though there should be about twice as much beef as there is of pork. Cook the meat and carrots cut in small pieces, until the latter are nearly done, then add the other vegetables cut small, a generous piece of butter, and simmer until cooked.

Stuffed Onions

Stuffed onions, cooked in papers to retain their homely savor, are very toothsome. Parboil the onions, throw them into cold water, and when cool, remove the centers with an apple-corer. Fill them with a piquantly-flavored sausage meat, wrap them in buttered papers, place them on the rack of a pan containing an inch of water and bake in a quick oven for three-quarters of an hour. Remove from the papers for serving, sprinkle them with pepper and salt and serve with melted butter.

Date Meringue

Wash, drain and dry the dates, stone, and cut them in small pieces. Spread one cupful of these over a platter and sprinkle with lemon-juice. Whip sufficient cream to make two large cupfuls, and sugar to sweeten; fold in the stiffly-whipped whites of two eggs and stir in lightly the pieces of date. Arrange in a deep glass dish in alternate layers with macaroon or sponge-cake crumbs which have been very slightly moistened with a little fruit-juice, or serve in glass dish by itself with a delicate nut cake.

Date Sandwiches

Mix equal quantities of date pulp and finely-chopped English walnut meats. Moisten slightly with a little soft butter or sweet cream, spread the mixture smoothly on thinly-sliced bread, cover with another slice, and press lightly to make them hold together.

Date Sandwiches, No 2

Mix equal amounts of date pulp and finely-chopped preserved ginger, moisten with a little of the ginger syrup, and spread over lightly-buttered bread. Cover with another slice, and finish as for other sandwiches.